



## 94TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2005 and 2006

HB1575

Introduced 02/15/05, by Rep. Bill Mitchell

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

New Act  
30 ILCS 105/5.640 new

Creates the Illinois AgrAbility Act. Provides that the Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with the University of Illinois Extension, shall contract with a non-profit disability service provider or other entity that assists disabled farmers, to establish and administer the Illinois AgrAbility Program in order to assist individuals who are engaged in farming or an agriculture-related activity and who have been affected by disability. Sets forth services to be provided by the Illinois AgrAbility Program. Sets forth eligibility requirements for the Program. Creates the Illinois AgrAbility Fund, a special fund created in the State treasury and, subject to appropriation, provides that moneys in the Fund may be expended for the Illinois AgrAbility Program and for no other purpose. Requires the University of Illinois Extension to submit certain documents to the Department of Agriculture. Amends the State Finance Act to create the Illinois AgrAbility Fund. Effective immediately.

LRB094 06889 JAM 37000 b

FISCAL NOTE ACT  
MAY APPLY

1 AN ACT concerning agriculture.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the  
5 Illinois AgrAbility Act.

6 Section 5. Findings. The General Assembly finds the  
7 following:

8 (1) Illinois is one of the leading  
9 agricultural-producing states in the nation. By being  
10 involved in such a diverse and highly mechanized industry,  
11 the more than 500,000 agricultural workers in Illinois are  
12 susceptible to any one of a number of work-related injuries  
13 and chronic health problems that limit an individual's  
14 ability to safely continue farming.

15 (2) Available estimates indicate that, each year in  
16 Illinois, more than 200 farm workers sustain injuries,  
17 which result in permanent physical disabilities affecting  
18 their future income.

19 (3) It is estimated that nationwide more than 200,000  
20 farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural workers  
21 experience injuries that result in lost work time. Of these  
22 injuries, 5% have serious or permanent results.

23 (4) According to the most recent census data,  
24 approximately 5,000 Illinois farmers have permanent  
25 disabilities as a result of accidents, health related  
26 ailments, and age.

27 (5) Farm operators and workers are typically highly  
28 skilled individuals and the loss of these individuals to a  
29 disability negatively impacts the Illinois farm economy.  
30 The AgrAbility Project established by the U. S. Department  
31 of Agriculture has been successful in helping agricultural  
32 workers who suffer from a disability continue to farm. A

1 similar program established by the State and working with  
2 the existing AgrAbility Unlimited Program will assist even  
3 more Illinois citizens in receiving the assistance that  
4 they need and will benefit the State agriculture industry.

5 Section 10. Definitions. As used in this Act:

6 "AgrAbility Unlimited" means the joint program of the  
7 University of Illinois Extension and the Easter Seals of  
8 Central Illinois established in accordance with the AgrAbility  
9 Program established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

10 "Department" means the Department of Agriculture.

11 "Director" means the Director of Agriculture.

12 "Production agriculture" has the meaning set forth in  
13 Section 3-35 of the Use Tax Act.

14 Section 15. Illinois AgrAbility Program established.

15 (a) Subject to appropriation, the Department, in  
16 cooperation with the University of Illinois Extension, shall  
17 contract with a non-profit disability service provider or other  
18 entity that assists disabled farmers, to establish and  
19 administer the Illinois AgrAbility Program in order to assist  
20 individuals who are engaged in farming or an  
21 agriculture-related activity and who have been affected by  
22 disability.

23 (b) Services provided by the Illinois AgrAbility Program  
24 shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

25 (1) A toll-free information and referral hotline.

26 (2) The establishment of networks with local  
27 agricultural and rehabilitation professionals.

28 (3) The coordination of community resources.

29 (4) The establishment of networks with local  
30 agricultural and health care professionals to help  
31 identify individuals who may be eligible for assistance and  
32 to help identify the best method of providing that  
33 assistance.

34 (5) The provision of information on and assistance

1 regarding equipment modification.

2 (6) Job restructuring.

3 (7) The provision of information on and assistance  
4 regarding the development of alternative jobs.

5 In order to provide these services, the Illinois AgrAbility  
6 Program shall cooperate and share resources, facilities, and  
7 employees with AgrAbility Unlimited, the University of  
8 Illinois Extension, and the Office of Rehabilitation Services  
9 of the Department of Human Services.

10 The costs of the program, including any related  
11 administrative expenses from the Department, may be paid from  
12 any funds specifically appropriated or otherwise available to  
13 the Department for that purpose. The Department may pay the  
14 costs of the Illinois AgrAbility program by making grants to  
15 the operating entity, by making grants directly to service  
16 providers, by paying reimbursements for services provided, or  
17 in any other appropriate manner.

18 (c) The Department has the power to enter into any  
19 agreements that are necessary and appropriate for the  
20 establishment, operation, and funding of the Illinois  
21 AgrAbility Program. The Department may adopt any rules that it  
22 determines necessary for the establishment, operation, and  
23 funding of the Illinois AgrAbility Program.

24 Section 20. Eligibility. To be eligible to receive  
25 assistance under this Act, an individual must meet all of the  
26 following:

27 (1) Be a resident of Illinois.

28 (2) Derive at least a portion of his or her income from  
29 production agriculture.

30 (3) Be affected by a disability.

31 (4) Meet any additional eligibility requirements set  
32 forth by the Department, in conjunction with the University  
33 of Illinois Extension.

34 Section 25. The Illinois AgrAbility Fund.

1 (a) The Illinois AgrAbility Fund is created as a special  
2 appropriated fund within the State treasury. The Director shall  
3 also accept and deposit into the Fund all gifts, grants,  
4 transfers, and other amounts from any legal source, public or  
5 private, that are designated for deposit into the Fund. All  
6 interest earned on moneys in the Fund shall be deposited into  
7 the Fund.

8 (b) Subject to appropriation and as directed by the  
9 Director, moneys in the Illinois AgrAbility Fund may be  
10 expended for the Illinois AgrAbility Program and for no other  
11 purpose. No more than 15% of the moneys expended in a fiscal  
12 year for the Program may be expended for administrative costs.

13 Section 30. Reports. Unless otherwise required by federal  
14 law, the University of Illinois Extension must provide the  
15 Department with a copy of any report or other document that it  
16 provides to the U.S. Department of Agriculture concerning  
17 AgrAbility Unlimited. The non-profit disability service  
18 provider or other entity awarded a contract under Section 15  
19 must annually up-date the University of Illinois Extension and  
20 the Department in writing on the status of the Illinois  
21 AgrAbility Program.

22 Section 95. The State Finance Act is amended by adding  
23 Section 5.640 as follows:

24 (30 ILCS 105/5.640 new)

25 Sec. 5.640. The Illinois AgrAbility Fund.

26 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon  
27 becoming law.